



Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman (centre), who is Sawit Kinabalu group chairman, witnessing the exchanging of documents between Universiti Malaysia Sabah Vice-Chancellor **Prof Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah** (left) and Sawit Kinabalu group managing director **Othman Walat** in Kota Kinabalu on Saturday. The memorandum of understanding was signed to intensify research and training collaboration on palm oil. Pic by Malai Rosmah Tuah

Sabah deal on palm oil research

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KOTA KINABALU: A document inked between Sawit Kinabalu Sdn Bhd and Universiti Malaysia Sabah over the weekend will see a special unit formed to spearhead research towards sustainable palm oil practices.

The entity, called Sustainable Palm Oil Research Unit (Spor), will place emphasis on sustainability principle from the planting procedures to related environmental issues.

UMS vice-chancellor Prof Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah said Spor would gather multi-disciplinary experts from the university to conduct an integrated effort towards environ-

mentally-friendly studies.

“The unit will also use the various biodiversity resources in Borneo to help find solutions to issues, such as the Ganoderma disease control — one of the specific challenges in planting oil palm in Sabah.”

Harun signed the memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Sawit Kinabalu Group managing director Othman Walat, witnessed by Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman, who is Sawit Kinabalu group chairman, on Saturday.

Musa welcomed the efforts by UMS and Sawit Kinabalu, as it was in

line with the state policy that emphasised on a sustainable economic development, and hoped that Spor would be the best platform to develop the state’s palm oil industry.

He said there was still a lot of room for value-adding in the industry here and hoped the products or research resulted from the collaboration would generate intellectual property that could be developed commercially.

Besides research works, the memorandum would also enable UMS students to carry out practical training in Sawit Kinabalu plantations.